



Volume 20 Issue 1

Community Trees

Winter 2009

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Council Luncheon Upcoming

The 2009 Iowa Community Forestry Awards Luncheon will be held on April 30 at the Airport Holiday Inn, located in Des Moines. The main purpose of the event is to recognize the recipients of the Council Community Forestry awards, communities that have qualified for Tree City USA awards, utilities qualifying for the Tree Line USA awards, and winners of the 5th Grade Poster Contest.

The Council awards recognize individuals and groups that have made significant contributions to urban and community forestry, whether through improving the size and health of community forests, increasing education and awareness, promoting advocacy,

etc. The Council is always excited to be able to call attention to the good work of deserving nominees.

The National Arbor Day Foundation's "Tree City USA" award recognizes communities that have worked to advance urban forestry and have invested in the local tree resources. To become a *Tree City USA*, your community must: 1) Have either a city forester or an active city tree board, 2) Have a tree ordinance, 3) Annually spend at least \$2 per capita for a community forestry program, and 4) The mayor must issue a proclamation naming a day as "Arbor Day".



TREE CITY USA

Qualifying communities will be presented with the award and will have the opportunity to take a photo with a state leader, possibly the Governor. *Tree City USA* applications can be found on the DNR Forestry Bureau's website

(www.iowadnr.com/forestry/treecity.html) and should be submitted as soon as possible.

Completed applications should be returned to Randy Cook, Forestry Bureau/ Iowa DNR, 502 E. 9th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0034. Please contact Randy Cook (515-281-5600, Randy.Cook@dnr.iowa.gov) with questions.

The Arbor Day Poster Contest is underway and fifth grade students are creating posters that follow this year's theme, "Trees are Terrific ... In Cities & Towns!". Iowa's winning poster will compete in the National Arbor Day Poster Contest, sponsored nationally by the National Arbor Day Foundation and Toyota, and in Iowa by the Telephone Pioneers.

President's Message

By Keith Majors



With changes in local governments and/or retirements of key personnel, there is often an opportunity to re-evaluate the status and future of any City program. When it comes to a forestry program, there always seem to be discussions on re-organization and what department is best suited to house Forestry. Before any permanent changes are implemented, there needs to be a thorough analysis of the past and present with an understanding of the goals of the program.

Forestry has traditionally been found in the parks department. Using data collected from the communities listed as Tree City USA awardees (National Arbor Day Foundation), it appears that 70% of urban forestry programs are affiliated with park departments. Apparently, when urban forestry programs were first developed, most were part of a parks department because the majority of public trees are typically located within the parks. Professionally-trained park managers consider themselves as part of the green industry and are supportive of tree initiatives. Thus Forestry easily found a home in the parks department.

There has been a recent theory that housing a forestry program within the public works department will make trees more acceptable to the people who deal with grey infrastructure, and the forestry program will influence these people to work towards incorporating more trees into the community. However, the theory does not take into account the fact that forestry programs normally are understaffed and underfunded, and then are put at a disadvantage by being grouped with many other larger programs that do not adequately value and support the needs of trees. Many of the grey infrastructure-minded public works programs see trees as unnecessary, in the way, and as liabilities. Can this theory work? Yes, but only if there is very strong and highly visible support from the department director and the city administration. It must be demonstrated that trees are assets, and a commitment must be made to incorporate them into city planning. In most cases, this is still just a theory.

Regardless of where Forestry is housed, the community will need to choose a program leader. Professionally schooled foresters and arborists are trained to understand the management needs of the urban forest. They know how important planning, implementation, and follow-up observations are to a successful program. They are also able to articulate that trees are a long-term investment. A well managed urban forestry program is much more than having someone to plant trees, provide tree care, remove trees when necessary and handle storm damage. The forester needs to conduct inventories, annual inspections, enforcement of tree codes, identification of hazardous trees, record keeping, supervision of personnel, prioritizing the scheduling of work, and communicating with people. An advanced education will provide the professional forester with the tools and abilities necessary to manage the program.

Finally, if a top-tier urban forestry program is desired, it would benefit a community that is considering a change in their program to seek input from some of the professional organizations that are available, including the Iowa Arborist Association and the International Society of Arboriculture.

Sign Up to Receive the Latest Info

The DNR's Urban & Community Forestry program is starting a new list serve to better keep in touch with community leaders, partners, and those who are interested in trees. Whether you manage the city's trees or those in your backyard, you'll find information of interest in this periodic update - including funding opportunities, tree health issues, and upcoming educational workshops and events of interest. Please send an email to join-CFC@lists.ia.gov to sign up. As with other list serves, you can unsubscribe at any time.

Another Great Resource

To find information on a variety of tree-related topics, feel free to visit shadetrees.iowadnr.gov. The site was launched a little over a year ago and has links to information on Tree Selection, Emerald Ash Borer, Tree Planting, Tree Care & Pruning, Tree Health, and Tree Identification.

Calendar of Events

April 30

IUCFC Awards Luncheon
Des Moines

randy.cook@dnr.iowa.gov

May 19 – June 23 (Tuesday's)

Community Tree Steward Program
Hardin County

www.extension.iastate.edu/hardin/

Iowa Urban & Community Forestry Council

John Batt, Council Bluffs	Tivon Feeley, IADNR	Terry Robinson, Iowa City
Mike Bevins, IADALS	Laura Hawks, ASLA	Tricia Rummer, IADNR
Don Brazelton, Iowa Assn CCB	Jeff Iles, ISU Horticulture	Deb Ryun, Conservation Districts
Matt Brewer, IADNR	Keith Majors, Davenport	Rick Tagtow, NICC
Emma Bruemmer, IADNR	Jim Mason, Country Landscapes	Paul Tauke, IADNR
Lisa Burban, US Forest Service	Mark Masteller, IADOT	Jan Thompson, ISU NREM
Jeremy Cochran, IADNR	Patty Petersen, Trees Forever	Mark Vitosh, IADNR
Ralph Conner, Perficut	Shannon Ramsay, Trees Forever	Paul Wray, ISU (retired)
Randy Cook, IADNR	Jesse Randall, ISU Forestry Ext	

***NOTE:** This newsletter can be found online at www.iowadnr.gov/forestry/treecity.html.

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